

Shichirin

The ***shichirin*** (pronunciation of *shichirin*[ⓘ]; Japanese: 七輪, literally "seven wheels") is a small charcoal grill.

Etymology

Shichirin being a compound word made up of the characters 七 (*shichi* or *nana*, "seven") and 輪 (*rin* or *wa*, "wheel," "loop," or "ring"), its coinage can be suggested through the individual *kanji*. A popular story links the "*rin*" of *shichirin* to the Edo period currency denomination, the one-rin coin (albeit a different character, 厘). It is said that the *shichirin* was an affordable way to cook a meal because the amount of charcoal needed for each lighting only cost seven *rin*.^[1]

Description

The *shichirin* is a lightweight, compact, and easy-to-move cooking stove. Most modern *shichirin* are produced from rigid blocks of diatomaceous earth mined from deposits. These blocks of earth were then carved by hand or turned by machine before being fired in a kiln and affixed with metal hardware.^[2] Some *shichirin* are made with a double inside and outside ceramic structure.

Charcoal is chiefly used for the fuel. *Shichirin* are said to be made in roughly the same way today as in the Edo period, though both ceramic and diatomaceous earth versions were common.^[3] The shape is mainly cylindrical, square, or rectangular, and the size also varies. In the Kansai region, they are also known as *kanteki*.

North American "hibachi"

In North America, small BBQ cooking stoves resembling shichirin are referred to as "hibachi" or "hibachi-style", which in Japanese refers to a small heating device which is not usually used for cooking. It has been suggested that these grills were confusingly marketed as "hibachi" when they were introduced to North America. The word "hibachi" is also (incorrectly) used in some parts of the United States to refer to Japanese steak houses or teppanyaki "iron hot plate" restaurants.^[4]

Use



Today's various *shichirin* (Tokyo Egota)



Shichirin stove at latter term of Edo period (Fukagawa Edo Museum) (<http://www.kcf.or.jp/fukagawa/>)



Shichirin and charcoal-broiled Pacific saury (*sanma*), which evoke a Japanese autumnal image

Charcoal is commonly used as a fuel for a shichirin. For outdoor cooking, black charcoal is used. When indoors, binchōtan is preferred. Binchōtan, a type of white charcoal, produces less of a smell when burned, can continue burning hotly for a longer time, and is less likely to flare up dangerously. As a cheaper alternative, sawdust charcoal may be used.

See also

- List of stoves

References

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2. *THE MAKING* (78) 七輪ができるまで (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXs6-hTiE9Y>), archived (<https://ghostarchive.org/varchive/youtube/20211214/hXs6-hTiE9Y>) from the original on 14 December 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021
3. 「大野城市歴史資料展示室解説シート民俗No.14 民具1（食生活にかかわる民具）」大野城市教育委員会 (<http://www.city.onojo.fukuoka.jp/library/kyouiku/rekisi/shuppan/minzoku-14.pdf>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20111002131505/http://www.city.onojo.fukuoka.jp/library/kyouiku/rekisi/shuppan/minzoku-14.pdf>) 2011-10-02 at the Wayback Machine
4. 英語の「Hibachi」は火鉢じゃなかった (<http://www.excite.co.jp/News/bit/00091117673827.html>) exciteニュース 2005年6月2日



North American "Hibachi" cast iron grill

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